

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4492

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

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FOR EUR/RPM

USOECD

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AORG, NATO, OECD, NAC

SUBJECT: NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL DISCUSSION OF
INTERNATIONAL STAFF SALARIES

REF: (A) STATE 148280, (B) USNATO 05945, (C) USNATO 05966

SUMMARY: A SPECIAL NAC MEETING WAS HELD JUNE 27 TO
DISCUSS THE INTERNATIONAL (IS) THREAT TO STRIKE ON
JUNE 30 AND THE REQUEST OF SYG LUNS THAT NATO EMPLOYEES
BE ACCORDED AN ADDITIONAL 20 PCT OF THE COST-OF-LIVING
(COL) WAGE ADJUSTMENT THAT WOULD FULLY OFFSET INFLATION
AND BRING THE IS ADJUSTMENT IN LINE WITH THE 100 PCT
OF THE ADJUSTMENT GRANTED TO EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (EC)
EMPLOYEES. END SUMMARY.

1. LUNS REMINDED PERMREPS THAT THE SECSGEN HAD PRESENTED
A UNANIMOUS REQUEST TO THE COORDINATED COMMITTEE OF
GOVERNMENT BUDGET EXPERTS (CCG) FOR A 100 PCT COL
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ADVANCE, BUT ONLY 80 PCT HAD BEEN GRANTED. NOW THAT
EC EMPLOYEES HAD RECEIVED A FULL 100 PCT, NATO
EMPLOYEES BELIEVED DISCRIMINATION HAD BEEN SHOWN AND,
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN NATO'S HISTORY, THREATENED TO
STRIKE. HE ASKED PERMREPS TO APPEAL PERSONALLY TO
GOVERNMENTS TO GRANT NATO EMPLOYEES, IN WHATEVER
COUNTRY THEY WERE WORKING, THE FULL INCREASE.

2. CATALANO (ITALY) REMINDED NAC THAT ITALY HAD ABSTAINED FROM THE EC VOTE. HE ADDED THAT SOME COUNTRIES WERE EXPERIENCING ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, THAT THE CCG MUST CONSIDER THE ADDITIONAL 20 PCT ADVANCE, AND THAT HE WOULD REFER THE SYG'S REQUEST TO HIS AUTHORITIES.

3. KILLICK (UK) DESCRIBED EVENTS LEADING TO THE EC DECISION, SAYING A MEDIATOR HAD BEEN APPOINTED ONCE EC EMPLOYEES SAID THEY WOULD STRIKE IF LESS THAN 100 PCT COL ADVANCE WAS GIVEN. THE BRITISH PRESIDENCY BELIEVED IT HAD NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO ACCEPT THE MEDIATOR'S RECOMMENDATION. HE REITERATED THIS WAS AN INTERIM PAYMENT AGAINST A SALARY REVIEW, ADDING THAT EC EMPLOYEES HAD AGREED IF THERE WERE AN OVERPAYMENT THEY WOULD REFUND THAT OVERPAYMENT. HE ASKED IF NATO EMPLOYEES ALSO WOULD AGREE TO REFUNDING SUCH AN OVERPAYMENT.

4. TINE (FRANCE) POINTED OUT THAT FRANCE HAD SUPPORTED A 100 PCT ADVANCE IN BOTH THE CCG AND THE EC. THE FRENCH PRIME MINISTER HAD ADOPTED A POLICY OF NEITHER INCREASING NOR REDUCING PURCHASING POWER OF FRENCH CIVIL SERVANTS. HE INVITED THE SYG TO ASK THE IS TO DROP ITS STRIKE THREAT.
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5. LUNS SAID THAT HE WOULD BE MEETING WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29, WITH 60 MEMBERS OF THE NATO STAFF ASSOCIATION AND WOULD ALSO CONTACT THE CCG CHAIRMAN TO SEE WHAT COULD BE DONE. HE REMARKED THAT A 50 PCT SALARY INCREASE HAD BEEN APPROVED BY THE WHITE HOUSE, WHICH MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO UNDERSTAND PERMITTING THE PURCHASING POWER OF THE IS TO DECREASE AS IT HAD OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS.

6. AMBASSADOR BENNETT REPORTED THAT THE US HAD CONSIDERED THE QUESTION CAREFULLY, BELIEVED THE EC PRECEDENT A WRONG ONE TO FOLLOW, AND WAS NOT PREPARED TO AGREE TO ANY INCREASE PENDING THE 1977 GENERAL REVIEW.

REPLYING GENERALLY TO THE SYG'S COMMENTS, HE SAID THAT SENIOR CIVIL SERVANT SALARIES IN THE US HAD RECENTLY BEEN INCREASED FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 1969. NO AMERICAN CIVIL SERVANT WOULD STRIKE AND HE HOPED THAT THE IS WOULD RECONSIDER THE QUESTION, IN ORDER TO AVOID ESTABLISHING A SERIOUS PRECEDENT. HE REPORTED HIS CONVERSATION IN WASHINGTON WITH A SENIOR OFFICIAL

RESPONSIBLE FOR WAGE MATTERS REGARDING THE CONCERN OF CONGRESS AT THE SALARY LEVELS OF ALL INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, CONGRESSIONAL CRITICISM OF COMPLETE INDEXATION FOR INFLATION AND THE ADVERSE REACTION IF THE COUNCIL WERE TO GRANT AN INCREASE IN THE FACE OF A STRIKE THREAT.

HE RECOMMENDED THAT NAC FORMALLY CONSIDER MEASURES TO PRECLUDE FURTHER WORK STOPPAGES AND STRIKES IN NATO, AND THAT THE DEPUTY PERMREPS MEET SOON TO DISCUSS THIS AND OTHER RELATED MATTERS UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE DEPUTY SYG.

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7. PAULS (GERMANY) STATED GERMANY HAD ABSTAINED FROM THE EC DECISION. HE POINTED OUT THE 141ST REPORT HAD BEEN PREPARED AND COULD ONLY BE CHANGED IN A COORDINATED WAY, ONCE THE SYG PRESENTED A PROPOSAL TO THE CCG. GERMANY IS AGAINST STRIKES AT ANY LEVEL, AND WOULD WELCOME THE REMOVAL OF THE IS STRIKE THREAT. HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT REVISE THE 141ST REPORT.

8. SVART (DENMARK) STATED HE HAD NO INSTRUCTIONS, BUT COUNSELED AGAINST A STRIKE BECAUSE OF THE INTERPRETATION WHICH COULD BE GIVEN TO IT BY "THE OTHER SIDE," I. E. THE SOVIETS. MILITARY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STATED INTERNATIONAL MILITARY STAFF (IMS) WOULD CONTINUE AT A REDUCED WORKING LEVEL, BUT THE DEFENSE PLANNING COMMITTEE (DPC) MIGHT NEED TO CALL IN UNIFORMED MILITARY SUPPORT TO CONTINUE FUNCTIONING.

9. BUWALDA (NETHERLANDS) ADVISED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD ABSTAINED IN THE EC DECISION. HE BELIEVED THAT GREATER CONTACT SHOULD BE MAINTAINED WITH IS EMPLOYEES TO HEAR THEIR VIEWS, BUT THAT A STRIKE WAS THE WORST WAY OF ACHIEVING EMPLOYEE OBJECTIVES.

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10. KIRCA (TURKEY) COMPARED THE SALARY OF A TURKISH EMPLOYEE WORKING FOR THE IS AND ONE WORKING IN THE TURKISH EMBASSY; THE LATTER IS PAID FAR LESS. HE ASKED THE LEGAL BASIS FOR A NATO STRIKE. SYG LUNS REPLIED THAT THE RIGHT TO STRIKE HAD NEITHER BEEN OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED NOR FORBIDDEN BY CONTRACT. EC HAD HAD NINE STRIKES, WHILE NATO HAD NONE.

11. HARDY (CANADA) RECALLED THAT HE STATED AT THE JUNE 24 NAC HE HOPED THE QUESTION OF THE CCG RECOMMENDATION WOULD NOT BE REOPENED, SINCE IT WOULD LEAD TO AN ENDLESS ARGUMENT. THE NATIONS REPRESENTED IN CCG HAVE THEIR OWN PRACTICES AND STANDARDS, AND ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS; ARGUMENTS COULD BE FOUND TO JUSTIFY ANY POSITION. HE WOULD OBJECT TO HAVING THE QUESTION OF AN ADDITIONAL 20 PCT DISCUSSED AGAIN IN THE CCG. HE CONSIDERED A MEETING OF THE DEPUTY PERMREPS HIGHLY DESIRABLE. HE WAS TRANSMITTING SYG'S STATEMENT TO HIS AUTHORITIES AND WOULD BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE QUESTION AGAIN ON JUNE 29.

12. TINE ADDED THAT NATO WAS NOW FACING AN EMERGENCY SITUATION. HE FELT THAT THERE SHOULD BE A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE ORGANIZATION AND THE STAFF CONCERNING THE QUESTION OF REMUNERATION DURING A STRIKE, AND WOULD LIKE A DETERMINATION WHETHER THE NATO IS HAD A RIGHT TO STRIKE.

13. AMBASSADOR BENNETT REFERRED AGAIN TO HIS PROPOSAL FOR A MEETING OF THE DEPUTY PERMREPS WITH DEPUTY SYG PANSAS, SAYING THIS WAS NOT TO SEEK A SHORT-TERM SOLUTION, BUT A RECOMMENDATION FOR A DISCUSSION ON WAYS TO AVOID HAVING THIS QUESTION ARISE IN THE FUTURE.

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14. SYG LUNS ENDED THE MEETING BY REPEATING HE WOULD TALK WITH CCG CHAIRMAN AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE

STAFF ASSOCIATION, AND WOULD TRY TO DISCOURAGE THE
LATTER FROM STRIKING.

15. COMMENT: THE SOBER INTERVENTIONS BY A NUMBER OF
PERMREPS, THE STATEMENT BY THE MILITARY COMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN AND THE FIRM US AND CANADIAN POSITIONS WILL
HAVE THEIR EFFECT ON THE STAFF ASSOCIATION PLANS FOR A
STRIKE. LUNS, HIMSELF, SEEMED IMPRESSED BY REACTIONS TO
THE STRIKE THREAT AND WE EXPECT HIM TO MAKE EVERY
EFFORT TO FORESTALL A WALKOUT. SEPTTEL REPORTS OUR
CONTINGENCY EFFORTS TO ENSURE THAT THE HEADQUARTERS
CONTINUE TO FUNCTION IN THE EVENT OF A STRIKE. END
COMMENT.STREATOR

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